

Dear Parents,

Allow me to give you a brief outline of how STAAR will work this year, when it will take place, what grades will be taking what tests, etc., in order to help you plan ahead for this year's STAAR.

First, STAAR is a test for students in grades 3-8. Once students enter high school, they take STAAR EOC (end of course), often called just EOC. Students in grades K-2 do not take STAAR.

Next, let me direct you to two resources to help you look ahead to STAAR.

1. TEA's bank of released STAAR tests that you can use to study for STAAR  
<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/taar/testquestions/>
2. UME Prep's STAAR calendar  
<http://www.umeprep.org/filestore/UMEPrepSTAARCalendar090413.pdf>

Now, the bulk of this information will walk through each of the STAAR test dates and outline what to expect. As you can see from the school calendar, there are STAAR testing dates in December, March, April, May, June, and July, yet most of these tests affect only a very small minority of our students, with only the April test affecting the majority. Allow me to define each of these dates.

#### 1) March STAAR – March 31

The March STAAR is an EOC (End of Course) exam that tests ninth grade English (English I). This is the only test that occurs on March 31, and ALL ninth grade students will be taking this test on this day. Next year, this day will also include the test for tenth grade English (English II), but no other tests are taken on this day. The English I test will cover both reading and writing.

Because only ninth grade students are taking this test, they will come during their normal times. Early 9<sup>th</sup> grade students will arrive at 8:30am and test until 1:30pm. Late session students will arrive at 10:30 and test until 3:30pm. Although we will not have a formal lunch where we stop the test clock, students will be given periodic breaks where they will have time to eat lunch.

#### 2) April STAAR – April 1&2, 22 &23

These are the big test dates that affect the majority of our students and that affect the daily schedule for all of our students.

##### Tuesday, April 1

4<sup>th</sup> grade **Writing** (day 1)

7<sup>th</sup> grade **Writing** (day 1)

5<sup>th</sup> grade **Math**

8<sup>th</sup> grade **Math**

(no testing for grades 3, 6, or 9)

##### Wednesday, April 2

4<sup>th</sup> grade **Writing** (day 2)

7<sup>th</sup> grade **Writing** (day 2)

5<sup>th</sup> grade **Reading**

8<sup>th</sup> grade **Reading**

(no testing for grades 3, 6, or 9)

Tuesday, April 22

3<sup>rd</sup> grade **Math**

6<sup>th</sup> grade **Math**

8<sup>th</sup> grade **Social Studies**

(no testing for grades 5 or 9)

4<sup>th</sup> grade **Math**

7<sup>th</sup> grade **Math**

Wednesday, April 23

3<sup>rd</sup> grade **Reading**

5<sup>th</sup> grade **Science**

7<sup>th</sup> grade **Reading**

(no testing for grade 9)

4<sup>th</sup> grade **Reading**

6<sup>th</sup> grade **Reading**

8<sup>th</sup> grade **Science**

Because these STAAR testing dates in April affect so many of our students, require most (if not all) of our classroom space, and require most of our teachers to be proctors, we do not hold regular classes on these two days, even for grades that are not testing\*. Instead, we have special educational days just for these non-testing grades. Last year, the grades not testing did a four class rotation, cycling through PE, Music, English, and Math classes on STAAR days. We anticipate following a similar schedule this year. (\*Kindergarten is the only grade that is different. While they will come at 9am like the rest of the students, they will have regular classes in their regular class room with their regular teacher.)

Therefore, the schedule for April 1 & 2, 22 & 23 will be the same for all students. Every student, grades K-9 will arrive at 9:00am and will end the day at 1:30pm. Although we will not have a formal lunch where we stop the test clock, students will be given periodic breaks where they will have time to eat lunch. ***All students, whether testing or not are required to attend school each of these days.***

3) May STAAR EOC – May 6

This date is for the Algebra I EOC (end of course) test. This test is only for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students currently enrolled in Algebra I. All other students, including other 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders not enrolled in Algebra I will have normal classes.

Because only eighth and ninth grade students are taking this test, they will come during their normal times. Early students will arrive at 8:30am and test until 1:30pm. Late session students will arrive at 10:30 and test until 3:30pm. Although they will not have a formal lunch where we stop the test clock, students will be given periodic breaks where they will have time to eat lunch.

4) May STAAR – May 13 & 14

The State says that students must pass the 5<sup>th</sup> grade and 8<sup>th</sup> math and reading test in order to move onto the next grade. Therefore, the State requires that these two grades have two retest dates to help them pass this requirement. The first retest date for fifth and eighth grade is May 13 & 14. On May 13, any fifth or eighth grader who failed STAAR will retake math. On May 14 any fifth or eighth grader who failed STAAR will retake reading.

#### 5) June STAAR – June 24 & 25

The second retest opportunity for 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students is in June. On June 24 any fifth or eighth grader who failed STAAR and did not pass the first retest will retake math. On June 25 any fifth or eighth grader who failed STAAR and did not pass the first retest will retake reading.

#### 6) July STAAR – July 7 & 8

Like those students in 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, high school students must pass the five required EOC tests in order to graduate from high school\*. Therefore, they are also given retest opportunities. The first retest opportunity for high school students is in July. On July 7, any student who failed the English I EOC will retake that test. On July 8 any student who failed the Algebra I EOC will retake that test. (The second retest opportunity for these students is in December, which brings this announcement full circle.)

\* The five required EOC tests are: English I, English II, Algebra I, US History, and Biology.

As we approach these upcoming tests, more information will be made available, but this broad overview should help you plan ahead and know what to expect. I look forward to working with you all as we work toward a stellar year of STAAR. Thank you

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